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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Agenda item 30

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

France:* revised draft resolution

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 51/122 of 13 December 1996, 54/68 of 6 December 1999, 59/2 of 20 October 2004 and 60/99 of 8 December 2005,

Deeply convinced of the common interest of mankind in promoting and expanding the exploration and use of outer space, as the province of all mankind, for peaceful purposes and in continuing efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived therefrom, and also of the importance of international cooperation in this field, for which the United Nations should continue to provide a focal point,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation in developing the rule of law, including the relevant norms of space law and their important role in international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, and of the widest possible adherence to international treaties that promote the peaceful uses of outer space in order to meet emerging new challenges, especially for developing countries,

Seriously concerned about the possibility of an arms race in outer space, and bearing in mind the importance of article IV of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies,[1]

Recognizing that all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, should contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

* In its capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

[1] Resolution 2222 (XXI), annex.

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Considering that space debris is an issue of concern to all nations,

Noting the progress achieved in the further development of peaceful space exploration and applications as well as in various national and cooperative space projects, which contributes to international cooperation, and the importance of further developing the legal framework to strengthen international cooperation in this field,

Convinced of the importance of the recommendations in the resolution entitled "The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development", adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), held at Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999, [2] and the need to promote the use of space technology towards implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3]

Taking note of the actions already taken as well as those to be embarked upon to further implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III, as reflected in resolution 59/2 and the Plan of Action of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,[4]

Convinced that the use of space science and technology and their applications in such areas as telemedicine, tele-education, disaster management and environmental protection as well as other Earth observation applications contribute to achieving the objectives of the global conferences of the United Nations that address various aspects of economic, social and cultural development, inter alia, poverty eradication,

Taking note in that regard that the 2005 World Summit recognized the important role that science and technology play in promoting sustainable development,[5]

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its forty-ninth session,[6]

1. *Endorses* the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its forty-ninth session;[6]

2. *Urges* States that have not yet become parties to the international treaties governing the uses of outer space[7] to give consideration to ratifying or acceding to those treaties as well as incorporating them in their national legislation;

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[2] See *Report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna, 19-30 July 1999* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.I.3), chap. I, resolution 1.

[3] See resolution 55/2.

[4] A/59/174, chap. VI.B.

[5] See resolution 60/1, para. 60.

[6] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20).

[7] Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 2222 (XXI), annex); Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (resolution 2345 (XXII), annex); Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (resolution 2777 (XXVI), annex); Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (resolution 3235 (XXIX), annex); and Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 34/68, annex).

3. *Notes* that, at its forty-fifth session, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space continued its work, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/99;[8]

4. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee that the Legal Subcommittee, at its forty-sixth session, taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries:

(a) Consider the following as regular agenda items:

(i) General exchange of views;

(ii) Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space;

(iii) Information on the activities of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations relating to space law;

(iv) Matters relating to:

a. The definition and delimitation of outer space;

b. The character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, including consideration of ways and means to ensure the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union;

(b) Consider the following single issues/items for discussion:

(i) Review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space;[9]

(ii) Examination and review of the developments concerning the draft protocol on matters specific to space assets to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment;

(c) Consider the practice of States and international organizations in registering space objects in accordance with the workplan adopted by the Committee;[10]

5. *Notes* that the Legal Subcommittee, at its forty-sixth session, will submit its proposals to the Committee for new items to be considered by the Subcommittee at its forty-seventh session, in 2008;

6. *Also notes* that, in the context of paragraph 4 (a) (ii) above, the Legal Subcommittee, at its forty-sixth session, will reconvene its Working Group and review the need to extend the mandate of the Working Group beyond that session of the Subcommittee;

7. *Further notes* that, in the context of paragraph 4 (a) (iv) a. above, the Legal Subcommittee will reconvene its Working Group on the item only to consider matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space;

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[8] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20), chap. II.D.

[9] See resolution 47/68.

[10] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/58/20), para. 199.

8. *Notes* that, in the context of paragraph 4 (c) above, the Legal Subcommittee will reconvene its Working Group;

9. *Also notes* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-third session, continued its work as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/99;[11]

10. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fourth session, taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries:

(a) Consider the following items:

(i) General exchange of views and introduction to reports submitted on national activities;

(ii) United Nations Programme on Space Applications;

(iii) Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III);

(iv) Matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellite, including applications for developing countries and monitoring of the Earth's environment;

(b) Consider the following items in accordance with the workplans adopted by the Committee:[12]

(i) Space debris;

(ii) Use of nuclear power sources in outer space;

(iii) Near-Earth objects;

(iv) Space-system-based disaster management support;

(v) International Heliophysical Year 2007;

(c) Consider the following single issue/item for discussion: examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, including in the field of space communications, as well as other questions relating to developments in space communications, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries;

11. *Notes* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fourth session, will submit its proposal to the Committee for a draft provisional agenda for the forty-fifth session of the Subcommittee, in 2008;

12. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee that the Committee on Space Research and the International Astronautical Federation, in liaison with member States, be invited to arrange a symposium to address the theme "The use of the equatorial orbit for space applications: challenges and opportunities", with as

[11] Ibid., *Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20), chap. II.C.

[12] See A/AC.105/848, annex II, para. 6, for item (i); ibid., annex III, para. 8, for item (ii); A/AC.105/848, annex I, para. 20, and A/AC.105/869, annex I, para. 22, for item (iii); A/AC.105/823, annex II, para. 15, and A/AC.105/848, annex I, para. 21, for item (iv); and A/AC.105/848, annex I, para. 22, for item (v).

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wide participation as possible, to be held during the first week of the forty-fourth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee;

13. *Agrees* that, in the context of paragraphs 10 (a) (ii) and (iii) and 11 above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fourth session, should reconvene the Working Group of the Whole;

14. *Also agrees* that, in the context of paragraph 10 (b) (i) above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee could, at any time during its forty-fourth session, reconvene its Working Group on Space Debris to consider comments resulting from the referral of the guidelines to the national level and any further developments, particularly the relationship between the revised draft of the space debris mitigation guidelines and nuclear power sources in outer space;[13]

15. *Further agrees* that, in the context of paragraph 10 (b) (ii) above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fourth session, should reconvene its Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space and that the Working Group should continue its intersessional work on the topics described in the multi-year workplan as amended by the Subcommittee at its forty-second session and as agreed by the Subcommittee at its forty-third session and the Committee at its forty-ninth session;[14]

16. *Agrees* that, in the context of paragraph 10 (b) (iii) above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fourth session, should establish, for one year, a working group on near-Earth objects, in accordance with the workplan under this item;[15]

17. *Endorses* the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for 2007, as proposed to the Committee by the Expert on Space Applications and endorsed by the Committee;[16]

18. *Notes with satisfaction* that, in accordance with paragraph 30 of General Assembly resolution 50/27 of 6 December 1995, the African regional centres for space science and technology education, in the French language and in the English language, located in Morocco and Nigeria, respectively, as well as the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for Latin America and the Caribbean, entered into an affiliation agreement with the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat and have continued their education programmes in 2006;

19. *Agrees* that the regional centres referred to in paragraph 18 above should continue to report to the Committee on their activities on an annual basis;

20. *Notes with satisfaction* the contribution being made by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the efforts of Member States and the Office for Outer Space Affairs to promote and support the activities being organized within the framework of the International Heliophysical Year 2007;

[13] See A/AC.105/869, para. 101, and annex II, para. 8.

[14] See A/AC.105/848, annex III, para. 8; A/AC.105/869, annex III; and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20), paras. 139-141.

[15] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20), para. 178.

[16] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20), paras. 81 and 87; see also A/AC.105/861, sections II and III and annex III.

21. *Also notes with satisfaction* that the African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, the first of which was hosted by the Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the Governments of Algeria and South Africa from 23 to 25 November 2005, will be held on a biennial basis;

22. *Notes with appreciation* that the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas was held in Quito from 25 to 28 July 2006 under the auspices of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, the European Space Agency and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and that the Government of Chile held a preparatory meeting for that Conference on 28 and 29 March 2006, with support from the Government of Colombia; notes that the theme of the Fifth Conference was "Regional space cooperation for security and human development" and that its results were set out in the Declaration of San Francisco de Quito and in the Plan of Action of the Conference; notes also that Ecuador will serve as secretariat pro tempore of the Conference for a period of three years, during which it will be responsible for the implementation of the recommended activities and programmes, for which purpose it will work in cooperation with the international group of experts; and notes further that the Sixth Space Conference of the Americas will be held in Guatemala in 2009;

23. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Convention on the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization was opened for signature in Beijing on 28 October 2005, that as at 1 June 2006 the Convention had been signed by nine States and that once the Convention has been ratified by five States, it will enter into force, thereby establishing the organization, with its headquarters in Beijing;

24. *Considers* that it is essential that Member States pay more attention to the problem of collisions of space objects, including those with nuclear power sources, with space debris, and other aspects of space debris, calls for the continuation of national research on this question, for the development of improved technology for the monitoring of space debris and for the compilation and dissemination of data on space debris, also considers that, to the extent possible, information thereon should be provided to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and agrees that international cooperation is needed to expand appropriate and affordable strategies to minimize the impact of space debris on future space missions;

25. *Urges* all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

26. *Emphasizes* the need to increase the benefits of space technology and its applications and to contribute to an orderly growth of space activities favourable to sustained economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, including mitigation of the consequences of disasters, in particular in the developing countries;

27. *Notes* that space science and technology and their applications could make important contributions to economic, social and cultural development and welfare, as indicated in the resolution entitled "The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development";[2]

28. *Reiterates* that the benefits of space technology and its applications should be prominently brought to the attention, in particular, of the major United Nations conferences and summits for economic, social and cultural development and related fields and that the use of space technology should be promoted towards achieving the objectives of those conferences and summits and for implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[1]

29. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the inclusion of the issue of the use of space technology in the reports submitted by the Secretary-General to major United Nations conferences and summits for economic, social and cultural development, and its inclusion in the outcomes and commitments of those conferences and summits;[17]

30. *Notes with satisfaction* the increased efforts of the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee as well as the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities to promote the use of space science and technology and their applications in carrying out actions recommended in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation");[18]

31. *Urges* entities of the United Nations system, particularly those participating in the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, to examine, in cooperation with the Committee, how space science and technology and their applications could contribute to implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration, particularly in the areas relating to, inter alia, food security and increasing opportunities for education;

32. *Invites* the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities to continue to contribute to the work of the Committee and to report to the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the work conducted at its annual sessions;

33. *Notes with satisfaction* that the open informal meetings, held in conjunction with the annual sessions of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities and in which representatives of member States and observers in the Committee participate, provide a constructive mechanism for an active dialogue between the entities of the United Nations system and member States and observers in the Committee;

34. *Encourages* entities of the United Nations system to participate fully in the work of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities;

35. *Notes* that space technology could play a central role in disaster reduction;

36. *Requests* the Committee to continue to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, and agrees that during its consideration of the matter, the Committee could continue to consider ways to promote regional and interregional cooperation based on experiences stemming

[17] A/61/495.

[18] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

from the Space Conference of the Americas, the African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development and the role space technology could play in the implementation of recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

37. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Committee established a closer link between its work to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development by contributing to the thematic areas that are addressed by the Commission;

38. *Agrees* that the Director of the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat should be invited to participate in the sessions of the Committee to inform it how it could best contribute to the work of the Commission and that the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs should participate in the sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development to raise awareness and promote the benefits of space science and technology for sustainable development;

39. *Notes with appreciation* that the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems was established on a voluntary basis as an informal body to promote cooperation, as appropriate, on matters of mutual interest related to civil satellite-based positioning, navigation, timing and value-added services, as well as the compatibility and interoperability of global navigation satellite systems, while increasing their use to support sustainable development, particularly in developing countries;

40. *Notes* the fact that the Office for Outer Space Affairs could integrate into its programme of work a number of actions identified for implementation by the Office in the Plan of Action of the Committee for the further implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III[19] and that some of those actions could be integrated into its programme of work only if additional staff and financial resources were provided;[20]

41. *Urges* all Member States to contribute to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications to enhance the capacity of the Office to provide technical and legal advisory services and initiate pilot projects in accordance with the Plan of Action of the Committee, while maintaining the priority thematic areas agreed by the Committee;

42. *Agrees* that the Committee should continue to consider a report on the activities of the International Satellite System for Search and Rescue as a part of its consideration of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications under the agenda item entitled "Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee" and invites Member States to report on their activities regarding the System;

43. *Requests* the Committee to continue to consider, at its fiftieth session, its agenda item entitled "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status";

44. *Also requests* the Committee, in view of the importance of space and education, to continue to consider, at its fiftieth session, under its agenda item

[19] See A/AC.105/L.262.

[20] Ibid., annex, para. 6.

entitled "Space and society", the special theme for the focus of discussions for the period 2004-2006 "Space and education", in accordance with the workplan adopted by the Committee;[21]

45. *Agrees* that the Committee should continue to consider, at its fiftieth session, its agenda item entitled "Space and water";

46. *Also agrees* that a symposium on space and water should be held during the fiftieth session of the Committee;

47. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Committee agreed to consider, at its fiftieth session, under its agenda item "Other matters", the issue of the future role and activities of the Committee and noted that the Chairman of the Committee could conduct intersessional, open-ended informal consultations with a view to presenting to the Committee a list of elements that could be taken into consideration at its next session;

48. *Agrees* to include a new item on the agenda of the Committee at its fiftieth session, entitled "International cooperation in promoting the use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development", under a multi-year workplan;[22]

49. *Also agrees* that a panel on space exploration activities, including the participation of the private sector, should be held during the fiftieth session of the Committee;

50. *Notes with satisfaction* that in accordance with the agreement reached by the Committee at its forty-sixth session on the measures relating to the future composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies,[23] on the basis of the measures relating to the working methods of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies,[24] the Group of African States, the Group of Asian States, the Group of Eastern European States, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Group of Western European and Other States have nominated their candidates for the offices of Chair of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, First Vice-Chair of the Committee, Chair of the Legal Subcommittee, Chair of the Committee and Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur of the Committee, respectively, for the period 2008-2009;

51. *Endorses* the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the period 2008-2009, as reflected in paragraph 50 above, and agrees that the Committee and its Subcommittees should elect their officers at their respective sessions in 2008 in accordance with that composition;

52. *Notes* that each of the regional groups has the responsibility to actively promote the participation in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies of the member States of the Committee that are also members of the respective

[21] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/58/20), para. 239, and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20), paras. 245 and 260.

[22] Ibid., *Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20), paras. 301-303.

[23] Ibid., *Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/58/20), annex II, paras. 4-9.

[24] Ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/52/20), annex I; see also *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/58/20), annex II, appendix III.

regional groups, and agrees that the regional groups should consider this Committee-related matter among their members;

53. *Requests* entities of the United Nations system and other international organizations to continue and, where appropriate, to enhance their cooperation with the Committee and to provide it with reports on the issues dealt with in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.